SCHOPENHAUER - ON ETHICS (PART 2)

(Continuing from Part 1)

That the world has merely a physical, and
(That the world has) no moral significance,
(That the world has a mere physical but no moral significance)

is the greatest, the most pernicious, the fundamental error,
(is the greatest, most ruinous and fundamental error,)

the true perversity of opinion, and
(the real perversity of the mind.)
[Note: *Perversität de Gesinnung, Perversity of Disposition]*

is at bottom that which faith has personified as Anti-Christ.
(an in a basic sense it is certainly that which faith has personified as the antichrist.)

Nevertheless, and despite all religions, which one and all maintain the contrary, and seek to explain it in their mythical fashion,
(Nevertheless, and in spite of all religions which assert the contrary of this and seek to establish it in their mythological ways,)

> (All religions maintain that the world has a moral significance. Religions seek to explain this moral significance in a mythical fashion.)

this root-error (that the world has no moral significance) never quite dies out,
(that basic error never dies out on earth,)

> (Despite the disagreement of all religions and their mythological explanations, the idea that the world has no moral significance continues to survive.)

but ever and again raises its head anew, till universal indignation compels it once more to hide it.
(but always raises its head from time to time until universal indignation once again forces it into hiding.)

> (The idea that the world has no moral significance continues to grow again and again until, each time, universal indignations compels it to go back into the hiding place in which it continues to survive.)
>
> [INDIGNATION: noun, strong displeasure at something deemed unworthy, unjust, or base; synonyms = resentment, exasperation, wrath, ire, choler. See anger.]

But certain as is the feeling of a moral significance of the world and of life,
(Yet as certain as the feeling of a moral significance of the world and of life is,)

> (But, even with such certainty of all religions, and humanity's universal acceptance, agreeing that the world has a moral significance, . . .)

its explication and the unraveling of the contradiction between it and the course of the world is, nevertheless, so difficult,
(still clarifying it and unravelling the contradiction between it and the course of the world is so difficult)

> (It is difficult to explain and unravel that idea of a moral significance from the contradiction that is created by the actual course that the world has followed.)

that it was reserved for me to expound the true only genuine and pure, and therefore everywhere and at all times operative foundation of morality, together with the goal to which it leads.
(that it was left to me to explain the true, only genuine and pure foundation of morality, which is therefore everywhere and always effective, along with the goal to which it leads.)

In this I have the reality of moral progress too much on my side, that I need fear ever again to be superseded and displaced by another.
(In this I have too much of the reality of moral events on my side to have to worry whether this theory could ever again be superseded and displaced by another.)

As long, however, as my “Ethics” remain unnoticed by the professors, the Kantian moral principle obtains at the universities, and among its various forms that of the “Dignity of Man” is now the most accepted.
(But as long as my ethics remains ignored by professors, what reigns in the universities is the Kantian moral principle and among its various forms the 'dignity of man' is now the favorite.)

I have already exposed its emptiness in my essay on the “ Foundation of Morality,” § 8, p. 169 (2d ed., 166).
(The vacuity of this I already elaborated in my essay *On the Basis of Morals, § 8,)*

For this reason we say only thus much here on this point.
(So here I will limit myself.)

If one were to ask on what this pretended dignity of man rested, the answer would come to saying that it rested on his morality.
(If one were to ask generally what is the basis of this alleged dignity of man, then the

answer would come around to its lying in his morality.)

> (The basis of the alleged dignity of an individual person man is rooted in the morality of mankind.)

Thus the morality rests on the dignity, and the dignity on the morality.

> (The morality of mankind is rooted in the dignity of the individual person, and the dignity of each individual person is rooted in the morality of mankind.)

But apart from this, the conception of dignity seems to me to be only ironically applicable to a being so sinful in will, so limited in intellect, so easily injured, and so feeble in body as man:
(But aside from all this, the concept of *dignity* seems to me to apply only ironically to a creature as sinful in willing, as limited in intellect, and as vulnerable and frail in body as the human being:)

"Quid superbit homo? Cujus conceptio culpa, Nasci poena, labor vita, necesse mori!"
(What can humans boast? After all, their conception is already guilt, birth is punishment, life labour, death inevitable!)

> (The concept of dignity in human beings is ironic to because mankind is so willingly sinful, so limited in their intellect, and so frail and vulnerable in their body.)
>
> [DIGNITY: noun, bearing, conduct, or speech, indicative of self-respect and appreciation of the formality or gravity of an occasion; 2 nobility or elevation of character; worthiness; ... 4 degree of excellence, either in estimation or in the order of nature . . .]
>
> (Of what qualities or things can humans boast? The 'conception' of mankind is founded in a 'guilty' (sexual) act, the (painful) birth process is deemed a 'punishment' for that guilty act, the life of a human being is destined to be served in labors or laborious activities, and the death of each person is inevitable!]

I would therefore postulate the following rule in opposition to the aforesaid form of the Kantian moral principle:
(Therefore, contrary to the above form of the Kantian moral principle, I wish to propose the following rule:)

Do not attempt in the case of any man with whom you come in contact an objective valuation of him as to worth and dignity;
(for every human being with whom one comes into contact, do not undertake an objective evaluation of him according to value and dignity)

hence do not take into consideration the badness of his will, nor the limitation of his understanding, nor the perversity of his ideas,
(hence do not take into consideration the baseness of his will, not the limitation of his understanding and the wrongness of his notions,)

for the first can easily evoke hatred, the last contempt against him;
(because the former could easily arouse hatred, the latter contempt for him.)

but bear in mind only his sufferings, his need, his anxiety, his pains.
(Instead, focus alone on his suffering, his distress, his fear, his pain -)

In this way we shall continually feel ourselves related to him, sympathize with him,
(then you will always feel kinship with him, sympathize with him)

and in- stead of hatred or contempt, experience that sympathy with him which is the only *αγαπη* to which the Gospel admonishes us.
(and instead of hatred or contempt sense that compassion for him which alone is *agape*, and to which we are exhorted by the gospels.)

> [AGAPE: noun, the love of God or Christ for mankind; 2 the brotherly or spiritual love of one Christian for another, corresponding to the love of God for man; 3 unselfish love of one person for another without sexual implications; brotherly love.]